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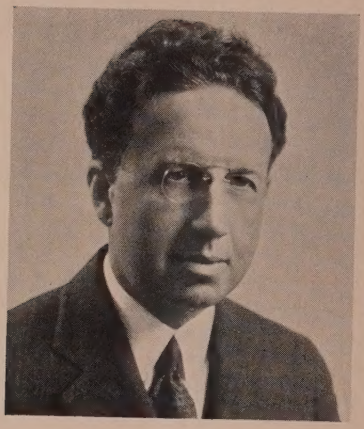
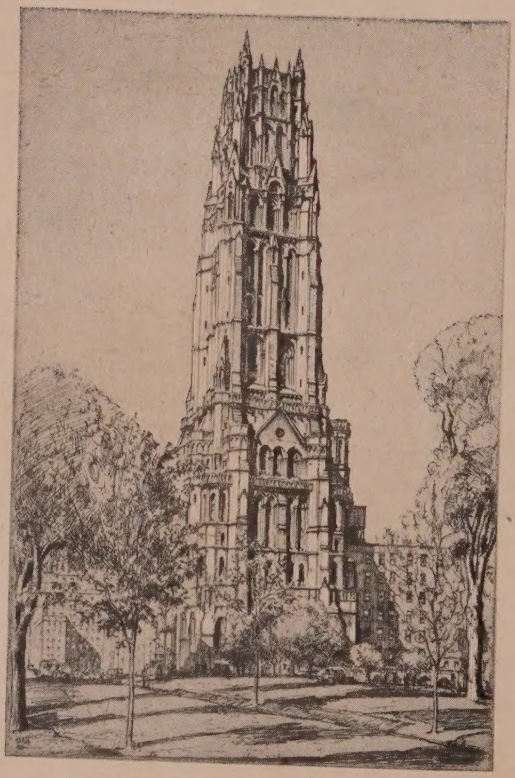


Harry Emerson Fosdick
Pastor, 1925-



The Riverside Church
Dedicated 1931

How to Stand Up and Take It

SERMON BY HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

TWICE in the book called by his name, Ezekiel the prophet says this: "The Spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet." Certainly, Ezekiel needed that experience, as we all do. He had been a youth in Jerusalem when the Babylonians came down on the city, utterly destroyed it and carried the most important citizens to exile in Babylonia. There he was, an exile amid the oppressive splendor of his conquerors, his own people uprooted, dejected, whipped, and wretched. And something happened to Ezekiel that put his name into history. He became one of the major creators of the new Judaism, helping to make possible at last the return from exile, the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the beginning of a new era in man's spiritual life. "The Spirit entered into me," he said, "and set me upon my feet."

There are two aspects to the relationship between ourselves and the world: one, what we do to the world; the other, what the world does to us. In prosperous times our major emphasis is on the first; we go out happily to do things to the world. But the time comes to all of us, as to Ezekiel, when the situation is reversed; the world takes the initiative and does things to us. Trouble, antagonism, disaster confront us, and the major question in our lives is whether or not we can stand up and take it.

As we face another new year, it is obvious that pretty much everything we care most about during this next twelvemonth is going to depend on that—stamina, fortitude, morale. Of course this is true about the nations at war. Hitler is right in this regard—the outcome of this war depends on which side cracks first. In America this issue may not confront us in so dramatic a fashion, but in this congregation now how much of our problem as individuals, as families, as citizens, as Christians, centers in the question of stamina! Can we stand up and take it?

Indeed, quite apart from this present crisis this experience is a permanent element in human life. No man escapes situations where all his chances of positive, creative living depend not alone on what he can do, but on what he can stand. This afternoon we sing Handel's *Messiah* here. Do you know the story of Handel's *Messiah?* Says his biographer: "His health and his fortunes had reached the lowest ebb. His right side had become paralyzed, and his money was all gone. His creditors seized him and threatened him with imprisonment. For a brief time he was tempted to give up the fight—but then he rebounded again to compose the greatest of his inspirations, the epic *Messiah.*" So, whether or not that "Hallelujah Chorus" was going to be written hung in the balance there, teetered on the thin edge of doubt, until, in what looked like a hopeless situation, the Spirit entered into him and set him upon his feet. What he

could do depended on what he could stand.

That kind of story has been endlessly repeated, so that Ezekiel is a parable for all of us. All around him his exiled people were lying down and going to pieces. Who could blame them? Shall men be asked to hope when there is no hope, to believe in the unbelievable, to think that out of such disaster any good can come, that folk thus ruined can once more be a power in the earth? So, lost faith, lost hope, lost morale were everywhere, until there arose in the midst of those exiled Jews another kind of character. The Spirit entered into him and set him upon his feet.

This morning we take it for granted that we would like a share in such stamina. Our instinctive admirations go out to it. These are difficult days and we know we need it. What goes on in the life of a man who has it?

For one thing, a man like Ezekiel certainly started by tackling himself. He could never have tackled that difficult situation as he did if he had not first of all tackled himself. That man had sessions with himself.

Long centuries separate him from us, but with regard to the matter we are thinking of now, time makes little difference. We know Ezekiel well. He had every alibi a man can have for cracking up and giving in. What kind of crazy, hopeless situation was that for a young man to face? He had hours of self-pity, when he felt endlessly sorry for himself. He had moods of resentment, when he rebelliously cursed the world and the day he was born into it. He had hours of bewilderment, when he could not see a step ahead, and in his bafflement cried, What is the use? He had moods of discouragement, black melancholy, into which he fell as into an abyss. Who does not know what went on inside Ezekiel? But something else too—ever and again a voice that cried, Nevertheless, you can play the man; stand up and take it!

Such a man we all admire. Human nature can be dreadful; especially in what it does, it is often dreadful. But our admiration is measureless for some people—plain, ordinary, everyday, undistinguished people — when we see what they can stand and still come up smiling. A minister recently asked an eminent surgeon how, in his experience, folk faced suffering and death. A surgeon ought to know. He thought for a moment and then answered, "Most of them act like heroes." Call it sportsmanship if you will; it is one of the things that fine sportsmanship teaches; deep in human nature there is a magnificent capacity to play the game through gallantly.

See! There are two philosophies of life. One is determinism, saying that heredity and environment decide everything we are or do, so that we are

> But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
> Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days.

The other philosophy is free will, saying that we can do anything we choose. Either one by itself is false. Determinism is not the whole truth; heredity and environment do not decide everything. And free will in the absolute sense is not true either; we cannot do everything we choose. Those two partial insights must be added together to get the truth. For when heredity and environment have done their utmost to a man, there still remains in every one of us this strange capacity to take what heredity and environment have done, to answer it, to make our individual response to it, to meet it with a dis-

tinctive rejoinder of our own, to stand up to it and do something with it. As another put it, we do not slap an alligator on the back and say, Be an alligator, old chap! We know he cannot help being an alligator. But we do slap a friend on the back and say, Be a man, old chap! for we are not sure whether he is going to be a man, and we know that he has it in him to be one if he will.

We may be sure, then, that Ezekiel started by having sessions with himself. Even victorious Babylon and his exiled people could not furnish an alibi for himself. My soul! look to yourself in these days! Many a man blames the world at large for his collapse when the real trouble is within himself. For the ultimate hope of the world is in individuals who reproduce an old experience: "The Spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet."

A second thing I am confident happened in Ezekiel. He saw that a difficult situation can positively call out a man's powers, educe from him capacities and faculties that pleasant and prosperous situations never demand, and so never produce. He saw that he could become a real man, not despite the exile but because of the exile. Real men and women are like trees on the Maine Coast—the south wind warms them, the sunshine nourishes them, the northeast gales strengthen them, the winter cold toughens them. All weathers go to make them.

I am concerned about America now in this regard. I belong with those who think that for us to become belligerents in this war would be the greatest tragedy in the history of the Republic. From every point of view, realistic or idealistic, I am convinced that such belligerency would be supreme folly. At the end of every road of argument I follow, stands a towering warning to the United States: "Stay Out of This War." But I am concerned about some of those who agree with me in that. I fear that their motive is primarily the hope of ease, of freedom from trouble for themselves, of perpetuating a comfortable *status quo*, a fallacious dream of happy isolation from the vast problems and disasters that confront mankind. That seems to me a fool's paradise. Belligerency or no belligerency, we are inextricably part and parcel of the world and, soon or late, every evil that afflicts it is our evil, every catastrophe that befalls it is our catastrophe. He who expects ease and comfort this next year is asking for what he has no right to, and what, I suspect, he will not get. One way or another we must take it, and the question is whether within ourselves we are of such quality that the more trouble comes, the more our powers are called out; the more difficulty rises, the more dimensions we discover in our characters; the more life demands stamina, the more stamina rises to meet it. That is good sportsmanship too; the harder the game, the more strength, fortitude, intelligence and skill let it pull out of you!

See, then, what Ezekiel must have done within himself. He shifted the center of his life to a place where the difficulties he faced did not unmake him but made him. If a man is primarily after wealth, the world can whip him. If a man is primarily after ease, and comfortable pleasure, the world can beat him. But if above all else a man wants to be a man, then he can capitalize almost anything that happens to him. Remember the words of Sir Thomas Brown, the Christian physician: "Live unto the dignity of thy nature, and leave it not disputable

at last whether thou hast been a man." Let any person seriously start with that desire paramount, and the northeast gales can strengthen his roots, the winter cold toughen his fiber. Everything that happens to him will leave him, as all his friends can see, more of a man than he was before, and, like Ezekiel, he will be the admirable person that he is, not alone despite the exile but because of the exile. No wilderness, no Moses! No exile, no Ezekiel! No cross, no Christ! The great souls have had their powers called out by the very troubles that they faced. How can one be a disciple of Christ without that quality? He stood up and took it.

Surely something else, however, went on inside Ezekiel. He saw that when God made him, God had put into him some qualities that were meant for just such difficult occasions, that he was fitted out by nature with certain basic psychological powers, if he only used them well, that could stand him in good stead in that evil hour.

Pugnacity, for example. How terribly we misuse it; to what bloody ends we let it run! Yet how indispensable pugnacity is, and to what high employments it can be put—this inner flare of combativeness that stands up gallantly to life's difficulties, saying, No, I do not propose to be whipped. Like every other basic instinct, pugnacity is an elemental endowment that ill used can ruin the world, or well used can help to save it.

One of the finest things about sportsmanship is that it channels pugnacity into helpful courses. A good game is a good fight. Sportsmanship is in part what William James asked for, a moral equivalent for war, using man's combative instincts, developing them, releasing them, controlling them, and channelling them in socially wholesome courses. Everybody needs pugnacity, if in the face of life's difficulties he is to stand up and take it, and if today that iron string could be set vibrating in some discouraged life here, it would be worth while having met together.

Certainly, no pugnacity, no Ezekiel, no Paul, no Martin Luther! Indeed, no pugnacity, no artists even like Millet. Millet's *Angelus* is beautiful, we say. But in 1859 when the artist finished it, his situation was not beautiful. That year he wrote, "We have only enough fuel to last us for two or three days, and we don't know how we are going to get any more; for they won't let us have any without money." While Millet was painting *The Angelus,* his mother died, and when he could not raise the carfare to visit her upon her deathbed, he was near despair. While he was painting *The Angelus,* he toyed with the idea of suicide, and resisting it drew a sketch of an artist lying dead at the foot of his easel and a woman crying out, "Suicide marks dishonor!" How often beneath the loveliest creations of art and character and sainthood and social service, one finds this deep-seated, underlying, indispensable, but oft forgotten foundation, the combative instinct that refuses to give up the fight!

I am a Pacifist, but I do wish some people would stop mixing up the two words, pacifist and passive. "Pacifist" comes from two Latin words, *pax* and *facio,* and it means peace-maker. It is a positive word, being true to which involves all the strong, intelligent, morally combative faculties we have. "Passive," however, comes from another Latin word altogether, *patior, passus sum,* meaning to suffer, to submit. These

two words have no kinship; they are poles asunder. It was when Ezekiel was whipped that he was passive. But when the Spirit entered into him, and put him upon his feet, he joined the elect company of spiritual warriors concerning whom we sing yet,

> They climbed the steep ascent of heaven
> Through peril, toil, and pain.

Nevertheless, when we have said that the prophet tackled himself, saw that trouble could call out his powers, and tapped anew the deep resources of combative courage, we have not told the whole story yet. Ezekiel believed that whatever happened, God was not dead. As one of the Psalms tells us, his enemies in Babylon cried in scorn, as some cry today, Where is now thy God? but still he did not believe that God was dead.

We have been living through a generation when a cautious skepticism has been cultivated as a virtue. We have wished above all else not to be credulous. But, my friends, the world has always been saved in a pinch by people who believed in the unbelievable. Recall the days when our forefathers here were trying to build a united nation when it seemed impossible. A little over 150 years ago, in 1787, Nathaniel Gorham, delegate from Massachusetts, rose in the Constitutional Convention and said this: "Can it be supposed that this vast country, including the western territory, will, one hundred and fifty years hence, remain one nation?" Well, could it be supposed? That seemed as impossible to many then as an effective and peaceful federation of the world seems to many now. And then, as always in a pinch, the situation was saved by people who believed in the unbelievable. Moreover, habitually in history, undergirding such men's persistent endeavors, one finds strong faith in God. As Lincoln said about slavery, it will end "as sure as God reigns and school children read."

I feel sorry today for people who have no faith in God, not so much theologically as practically sorry. For if there is no God, then some form of materialism is the explanation of the universe, and that means that we came from nothing save the dust, are going nowhither save back to it again, and the whole course of history on this planet is an accident of fortuitous atoms going it blind. Nothing in the end will come of it. That is no philosophy of life to empower man in days like these to stand upon his feet and confidently face difficulty, sure that it is everlastingly worth while to do so. According to one of George Moore's novels, the Irish peasants, poor and starving, were set to building roads, not because the roads were needed but only to keep the peasants busy, and furnish an excuse for feeding them. So they built roads that ended in dreary bogs and served no useful purpose for any one, and George Moore says, "The road which leads nowhere is difficult to make, even though starving men are employed upon it; for a man to work well there must be an end in view." That is true about life, and the curse of thoroughgoing irreligion is that it sets men to work on roads that ultimately lead nowhere.

When the Spirit entered into Ezekiel and set him upon his feet, be sure that he had caught a fresh vision of God and of his purpose for Israel. So Ezekiel belonged to something greater than himself. He who could not be strong for his own sake alone could be strong when he forgot himself and thought of Israel and Israel's God. What he could not be and do for himself, he could be

and do for his people. God was not dead. His purpose was not finished. His people's tragic situation was not the last word. God builds no roads that lead only to dreary bogs with no outcome. Ah, Ezekiel, if you could see now how right you were, believing in the unbelievable because you believed in God, you would be amazed.

I challenge myself and you, my friends, to such a faith today. The world desperately needs it. The weight of history is on our side, when in the face of these present tragedies we still believe in the unbelievable because we believe in God. Our children's children will yet look back on us, thankful that we did not crack up, give in, and lose our faith, if we let the Spirit enter into us and set us upon our feet.

Nevertheless, one further matter is the climax of this experience which we are studying. Note how Ezekiel puts it: "The Spirit entered into me." This thing that happened to him was not so much something he did, as something that was done to him. He did not get it by willing it alone, by thrusting his volition after it, but by receiving it. The Spirit entered into him. He was played out, done in, all gone, and lo! in an hour of spiritual receptivity, he opened his life to a power greater than himself that set him upon his feet.

The danger in a sermon like this is that it should seem to many an appeal simply to their unaided wills. Tackle yourself! it says. Let trouble call out your powers! Awaken the combative instincts that refuse to give up the fight! Believe in God and his purpose, still unconquered and unconquerable! But true as all this is, this is something we do, and for all our effort it can be ineffective unless it comes to its fulfillment in an inner receptivity, an awareness of available resources from beyond ourselves, as though the sea at flood-tide poured in and filled a bay, in a way the bay with all its effort never could fill itself. Ezekiel did not set himself on his feet. He was set on his feet.

At its deepest, this is what religion means to some of us. The basic reason why men and women lie down on life instead of standing up to it is that within themselves they run out of power. The ability to stand up and take it is a power question, and power is not something we get merely by blowing on our hands and willing it, but by opening ourselves inwardly to spiritual resources greater than our own, and appropriating them. The water that I shall give you, said Jesus, shall be in you "a well of water springing up." "Strengthened," said Paul, by God's "Spirit in the inward man."

Well, life is a great game. It is no place for a cry baby. To play it well and play it through takes stamina. And it is inspiriting to look back on history and see how the ostentatious conquerors rise, fall, and are forgotten, how imperial policies that once seemed everything appear nothing now in retrospect, while like mountains, seeming to rise higher the farther we recede from them, stand out the souls who had such inward resources that for mankind's sake they played the game and played it through. The Spirit entered into them and set them upon their feet.

Dr. Fosdick preached the foregoing sermon December 29, 1940.

Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Eternal God, before Whose face the generations rise and pass away, we lift our hearts to Thee. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst made the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, we worship Thee.

Around the brief vista of our transient years throw the wide horizons of Thine everlastingness. For we are spirits, born of Spirit, the universe our home, the eternal God our Father. Beguile us away from our too great obsession with the immediate, and let us see our lives in great horizons. Grant us now large thoughts of Thee, and profound insights into life's meaning.

We come before Thee in penitence, for we share the guilt that has brought disaster on the world, and in our own lives we confess our private and peculiar sins. We would not carry the burden of them into the future. We would pass through the wicket gate of this new day, contrite, penitent, forgiven, and reëmpowered. Let the cleansing of Thy Spirit come upon our hearts today.

We come before Thee with gratitude. Thanks be to Thee that we have reached this hour with such honor as we have. For all troubles well borne, for all duties well done, for all joys that have illumined our lives, for all secret visitations of Thy Spirit, thanks be to Thee! Now we turn to the future. We know not what shall befall us there. Every day is an adventure, and every month an unknown continent. We pray that as our days are, so our strength may be. Give us tasks worth doing that shall dignify our days. Give us power to do them well. Grant us light enough to walk by, and strength enough to walk with, that we may reach our end undishonored and unashamed.

We lay before Thee the dear concerns of our families. For the beauty of friends, for the loveliness of children, for the promise of growing youth, thanks be to Thee! Let Thy grace rest in this nation, we beseech Thee, upon those institutions from which our nation's character must come—good homes, good schools, good churches. Forgive us that we have neglected them and been unworthy of them. Strengthen them for our sake and the sake of the commonwealth.

Thou seest the care in our hearts that no prayer can express, for a just and abiding peace. May our nation in these stormy days and swirling waters steer a true course that shall bring us no regret! For ourselves also we pray. Thou alone canst see in what disrepair, disintegration, and disheartenment some of us come to Thy sanctuary. Ah, Lord, beyond our power to ask let Thy grace and strength bring renewal of life, inward resources that shall make us adequate for the days ahead, that we may be able to face whatever life may bring, rise above it, be superior to it, win a victory in the face of it, in the Spirit of Christ. Amen.

A TYPICAL HENRY STREET NURSE

Hospitalization Without the Hospital

Henry Street Visiting Nurses Make Half-Million Calls a Year

CONTRIBUTED BY DR. HARRY ARANOW

IN A world at cross-purposes with itself, full of conflicting emotions, new ideologies and shifting standards, it is hard to find a philosophy of life to cling to. But in the welter of all the chaos, there are a few things one can fasten one's faith to and know that no matter what happens these are firm and real and unchanging. One of these bulwarks is, of course, one's religion, and another is the fundamental belief in some of our agencies and the job they are doing to help our unfortunate people, in sickness and in health and in times of financial stress.

There are many of these organizations which are doing a superb job, but I would like to speak particularly of the Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service. My reason for choosing this organization as a text, so to speak, is because I know that there is a common thread relating the Henry Street Nurses and The Riverside Church, which makes some of their work possible, and the fact that for many years I have been a member of the Henry Street Medical Advisory Committee.

Located only a few blocks away from Riverside Church is the Riverside district office of the Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service—where each morning of the year nurses gather to receive their calls before they start out to care for the sick. The name "Henry Street" to many of us stands for the Lower East Side and Lillian Wald, for those of us who have been long in the city have known of her work among the East Side's foreign born. What many do not realize is the extent to which the Visiting Nurse Service has grown and to which it now spreads out, serving the four and one-half million people who live in Manhattan, Bronx, and Queens. At fifteen branch offices, like our own Riverside branch, nurses receive their calls each day, and go forth on their rounds—making each year a half-million visits to over 90,000 patients.

Statistics never mean much to me except as I think of them in terms of individuals—and to me these figures mean the care I've seen given in home after home during the years I have practiced medicine. Perhaps the quality which has impressed me most is that of the individual service and kindly consideration that I've seen given each patient, and the fact that those nurses can care for the really acutely ill with almost no equipment, in homes where there is little with which to work.

In New York City where hospital buildings loom large about us, it often seems as though all of the sick must be housed there—yet that is far from true. Eighty per cent of those who are ill stay at home, statisticians tell us. Some of these do not need a nurse's care nor do they need hospitalization. Others wait to call the doctor until they are too ill to be moved, and many a mother I have known who had such a dread of being separated from her child that she flatly refused to let me send it away

from home. Last year the Henry Street nurses cared for almost one-third of all the pneumonia patients reported in their three boroughs, and yet today few among us ever think of such care being given outside of the hospital.

As an obstetrician, there is one other figure that always impresses me when I hear it, and that is the fact that Henry Street nurses give care to one-third of all the new babies born in their three boroughs before the babies are six weeks old. Maternity work is a large part of their program. Nurses are on call day and night throughout the year to give nursing care to mothers at time of delivery when their babies are born at home. I have often asked them whether they were not afraid to take their calls at night, going to the poorest tenement districts as they do, but they say their blue uniform is so well known that it is all the protection they need.

Public Health nurses are concerned not only with the care of the sick but also with the prevention of illness through health teaching. As a privately supported agency the Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service works closely with the Department of Health and plans its program carefully so that it never duplicates but rather adds to the total effort where most needed. Certain types of patients have abnormally high death rates, and as public health workers the Henry Street nurses give these problems serious consideration. One group is that of babies who are born prematurely and are tiny and weak. Most of these, if not born in the hospital, are sent there where they can be given care in special nurseries. When the doctor decides that they are strong enough to be sent home, their names and addresses are given to the nearest Henry Street office and a nurse visits to make sure that everything is ready and the mother understands the care needed. As soon as the baby arrives home the nurse visits again and as frequently thereafter as she thinks necessary. I am told by a medical friend who is watching their work that in his hospital he sees a real difference—these babies aren't coming back sick in a week or two needing readmission as they did before Henry Street inaugurated this service.

Recently, several hospital services have asked that the nurses follow up cardiac children dismissed after a long stay in the hospital to low-income homes. It is hard for overworked mothers of large families to keep these children quiet and yet to have them amused and happy so that they do not miss too much the play that normal children have, which is denied them. The death rate from heart disease is high and it is a long fight for which the mothers must have guidance if they are to win out.

Up here at Riverside, there are eighteen full-time nurses giving this type of care to the people in this health district. Last year these young women made 26,613 visits to 5,171 patients. At the mothers' club sessions, where expectant mothers are taught how to prepare for the coming of their babies, 336 women attended regularly in 1939. In the same neighborhood, 146 people who had pneumonia were given the nursing care without which there would be so little comfort for the patient. Of these patients cared for less than fifty per cent could afford to pay anything at all for this service, and of these, ten per cent paid only a little toward the nurse's care.

Typical of the care given to the aged was Mr. White whose wife had been ill

for five months with paralysis. The Whites were living on a small pension and were able to manage nicely on it, since there were only the two of them, provided there were no large "extras" to be taken out unexpectedly. Mr. White had cleaned the room, cooked and given care to his wife, to whom he was devoted, ever since she was stricken with paralysis and had to lie helpless. The Henry Street nurse came daily and gave the nursing care and difficult treatments ordered by the physician. Mr. White assisted her in every possible way, and the devotion of the couple was most touching. They were particularly grateful for the nurse's visits since that was what made it possible for them to remain together. "We have so little time to spend together now that we are both growing old," he told the physician. Mr. White always insisted that the nurse accept a small fee, for he did not feel that he could accept the care free, and respecting his desire, she accepted what he gave.

There are many such cases—cases where a person can afford to pay a little and wants to do so. There are also those who can afford to pay the whole cost of the visit. And I emphasize this because I have found in my practice many patients who are not in need financially, and who do not need or want full-time nursing service, but who are in need of skilled nursing care on an hourly basis. In the past it has been most difficult to secure, unless one employed a full-time nurse, and because of this need Henry Street recently extended its service to include all groups. The pay service does not interfere in any way with the free service for it is administered at cost and Henry Street has come to view itself as being similar to a hospital which has private, semi-private and ward space, the pay service corresponding to private room service.

I know that the salary of a nurse for several months each year is paid through The Riverside Church Benevolence Fund. This is what is made possible during that period: about eight visits per day to patients in this area referred by their families and neighbors, their doctors, the hospital clinics or social service departments, or even the policeman on the beat. The call may come from the home of an expectant mother whose baby is coming, or it may be a frantic mother whose child has scarlet fever and whose doctor has told her that she cannot keep the child at home where there are other children, unless the Henry Street nurse comes in to show her how to isolate the child and carry out strict precautions. Surgical dressings have been done for cancer patients; diabetics have been taught to take their insulin; arthritics, crippled and bedfast, have been given much needed care; families with low incomes have been taught how to budget and market wisely so as to be able to feed the family properly and keep the children well. Of special concern to the Riverside nurses is the fact that they serve the largest rooming house district in the city where they visit with crowded families and lonesome youths confined to the one room which they call home. Occasionally a doctor asks that a nurse be placed in a home all night when there is critical illness and he thinks nursing care is imperative, and the family cannot afford such service. In short, each patient and need is different, but Henry Street, all these years, has clung to the policy of "never refusing a call."

And so day after day the Henry Street nurses carry on, advising, nursing, re-

(*Concluded on page 77*)

One Hundred Years

As THIS issue of THE CHURCH MONTHLY is being made ready for the printer, we are under the embarrassment of being unable to write about the particular interest that is uppermost with us here just now, namely, the 100th Anniversary celebration during the week of February 9th. We will carry the story of that experience in the March issue. But there have been other celebrations, notably on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary. From faded clippings from the *Tribune* of Monday, February 19, 1866, we have culled some paragraphs from the Anniversary Sermon of Dr. Armitage, preached the day before in the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church on West 46th Street, "just off Fifth Avenue." If we think the preaching of those days was quaint, we will have to agree that the newspaper reporting had its quaint angles also. Here is the opening paragraph:

"Dr Armitage then delivered a very solemn and deeply affecting discourse from Revelations 1, 12, in which he drew an analogy between the seven golden candlesticks of the temple, the care and attention bestowed upon them, and the uses to which they were put, and the church over which for eighteen years he has presided. After that he proceeded with a historical narrative of the rise and progress of the church."

Then came the sermon. We quote the opening sentences of it because of their historical significance. Certainly they are significant to us.

"I will now give you a brief sketch of the rise and progress of this body. It was organized as the Norfolk Street Baptist Church, and under the pastoral care of Rev. Geo. Benedict, it was publicly recognized by the churches of the denomination on the 15th of February, 1841. It was not the child of a public ecclesiastical rupture; but, as its first pastor expresses it, 'our heavenly Father has vouchsafed to bless us, and to increase us with men as a flock, insomuch that our place of worship has become too strait for us. The providence of God seems evidently to say, "enlarge the border of thy tent; lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes." ' With these views he left the church that he had long served, 'to extend the cause of God in this City,' by planting a new church."

Midway in the sermon Dr. Armitage was saying this: "But brethren, look to the future more than to the past. You never had the strength that you have to-day. The city has grown between two and three solid miles since you were constituted. And if it grows as much during the next twenty-five years, you will be a down-town church again; for the same distance of growth will bring the body of the city to the other end of the Central Park. In that time you ought to be able to pay for your property here and plant two or three new churches around you. See to it that you mind the voice of your Master, who says, 'Occupy till I come.' "

Printed also as part of the story of the celebration was the following hymn which Dr. Armitage had written for the occasion:

Lord, thou hast made, through love divine,
This church like to a fruitful vine;
Strong in thy strength, each vigorous shoot
Is nourished from a heavenly root;
While far and wide, o'er many a wall,
Its pure and purple clusters fall.

Twenty-five years from grace to grace,
This vine-stock in this favor'd place
Hath grown, refreshing all the scene
With leaves of knowledge, bright and green;
Blossoms of truth, a large increase;
And fruits of holiness and peace.

Today we meet beneath its shade,
With none to make our souls afraid;
Lord, while we own this holy tree
Draws all its vital sap from Thee,
Still would we for thy presence pray
To tend and dress it day by day.

Then, Holy Spirit, still effuse
On every branch refreshing dews;
O Son of Righteousness! still shine
Auspicious on this spreading vine,
Grant us its increase to behold
A hundred—yea, a thousand fold.

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Thomas B. Armitage
(1846-1888)

Fifth Avenue Baptist Church
(1860-1922)

Pithy Points in Dr. Fosdick's Budget Sermon of January 12

THE sermon, entitled "A Challenge to The Riverside Church," was mailed to the entire congregation along with the regular issue of *The Riverside Weekly* on January 18. We are here reprinting a few pertinent paragraphs for the information of readers of THE CHURCH MONTHLY who do not get news of the Church through any other medium and who will naturally be interested to know what happened in the pulpit in connection with the budget appeal of which they got their first presentation in our January issue.

"Our first decade in The Riverside Church is finished. That is to say, our honeymoon is over, and we are settling down to the long haul of married life. It has been a grand honeymoon, but as every family knows, the qualities that make a glorious honeymoon are not identical with the qualities that make possible a long-sustained successful home. . . .

"Show us in any life where the power is, and we can tell where the most dangerous temptations are. So it is with an organization. At the end of our first decade we are a strong church. Shall we not then be gratified and even complacent about that? Upon the contrary, around the very places where our privilege, good fortune, and success are most evident, swirl the major temptations of this church. . . .

"A large church puts a much greater strain than a small church does on the self-starting, self-sustaining fidelities of the individual. In a small church, at least, we know that everybody else knows what we are doing, but in a large church we easily may feel that no one knows, and perhaps that no one cares. So if we do keep our church fellowship vital and effective, it must be because we are self-propelled. The danger of all large churches is what someone has called 'spectatoritis.' Individuals drift to the side lines, feel themselves no longer part of the game, become lookers-on, and so, losing any real sense of participation and responsibility, help to disintegrate the whole enterprise. . . .

"Some years ago the Church of Christ in China asked its moderator for a rallying cry for the year ahead, and he came back with this: 'O Lord, revive Thy church, *beginning with me.*' That prayer for an inward sense of personal responsibility is needed here if this church, having begun to build, is going to be able to finish. . . .

"The giving in this church is magnificent, especially poor people giving faithfully and sacrificially to the church and to its missionary and philanthropic service, so that again and again I personally protest, saying, You ought not to give so much. But I am being candid this morning, and I must say that any one who thinks of this next decade, and of the absolute dependence of this church for the support of its program and service on the voluntary giving of its membership, must be anxiously con-

cerned about this all too prevalent impression that we have no serious financial problems here. Some one has described a college course as a four-year loaf made out of father's dough. Well, ever and again we run on the impression that everything here is as financially easy as that. Let it be said then that father's dough has gone as far as it can go, and that we, the rank and file of this congregation, practically all of us in moderate financial circumstances, are definitely thrown back on ourselves for the support of any program of worship and service that this church carries on. ..."Whatever other predictions may fail about these next ten years, this one is certain: They are not going to be financially easy. If the prevalent impression, therefore, sinks into the people of this congregation that because we have this great building and the accumulated gains of a hundred years to sustain its physical operation, we have no financial problem, then nothing can prevent our having, year after year, to cut into our program of service, to stop at one point after another the output of usefulness that all this equipment was meant to house, until we become a shell, a building, that is, with no adequate program in it. For absolutely and entirely the program depends year by year on us! . . .

"You have stood by splendidly this first decade. May the second outdistance the first! I wonder if it is true, as they say, that the last word on Marshal Foch's lips when he died was '*Allons!*' 'Forward!' It is a great word on which to die. It is a great word to live on, too."

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HOSPITALIZATION WITHOUT THE HOSPITAL

(*Concluded from page 73*)

ferring their patients to other agencies where they cannot themselves supply the need, and above all giving that friendship and encouragement that gives courage to people when they are sick. New York is sometimes thought of as a lonesome, impersonal place in which to live, but we doctors know that it would be much more so were it not for institutions like The Riverside Church and the Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We are grateful to Dr. Aranow for this story of the Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service, particularly so because of the personal and understanding manner in which he relates the work to our neighborhood and to our interest as a Church.)

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Thinking About the Hymns

Mrs. Clarence Kanolt Writes About Moods and Attitudes Effected by Songs of Worship

ELSEWHERE in this issue you will find a hymn written by Dr. Thomas Armitage on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Norfolk Street Baptist Church. This led us to think about hymns in general, or more specifically, about the hymns we sing at our Sunday Services, Wednesday evenings, or on other occasions when our members come together in fellowship. Familiar words, familiar tunes—why were they written? What were the circumstances under which these authors were so inspired that their works have lasted over the centuries? No sooner had we begun our research when we discovered that the Women's Class had found this study of hymns worthwhile enough to spend a Class session on a review of some of the more familiar hymns in our own Church Hymnal. Now we pass on their thoughts to our readers.

First of all, what is a hymn? One definition might be that it is a poem sung as an act of devotion—a song of praise or adoration of God or a deity. "Fling Out the Banner" or "Onward, Christian Soldiers" stimulate us to praise and devotion. Sometimes we seek peace and consolation, and then we turn the pages to "Abide With Me," "Nearer, My God, to Thee," and "Lead, Kindly Light." Some hymns imbue us with a feeling of awe and wonder, such as "Holy, Holy, Holy," and "O Worship the King." In others we are uplifted in praise and adoration, for instance, "Old Hundredth."

> Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
> Praise him, all creatures here below;
> Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
> Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Of "Holy, Holy, Holy," a junior Church School boy said to his pastor, "I like that hymn because it makes me feel that God is very great." A Scotch poet voiced the same thought. "When I sing it," he said, "it makes me feel that we are in stronger hands than our own." All of us have the same idea for it is preëminently a hymn of adoration written over a hundred years ago by Bishop Reginald Heber of the Church of England.

In a different mood one might choose "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee." One would know from the reading of it that Dr. Henry Van Dyke was a lover of nature. The music is from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony which was a favorite of Dr. Van Dyke. He wrote the poem to express the symphony's religious faith and abounding joyfulness. These words and the music belong to each other in a beautiful tie.

A favorite hymn of everyone is "I Would Be True." This hymn was written by a young minister, Howard Arnold Walter, a graduate of Princeton and of Hartford Theological Seminary. Because of ill health he spent a year in Japan, teaching literature in Waseda University in Tokyo. While there he

wrote this hymn which he called, "My Creed," and sent it to his mother at Christmas. She was so pleased with it that she sent it to *Harper's Magazine* which published it. After graduation, Howard Walter gave his life to Christian work on the foreign field and went to India as a secretary of the International Y. M. C. A.

At Thanksgiving time many of us find ourselves humming the familiar "We Plough the Fields." Over 150 years ago, in Denmark, there lived a peasant who was also a poet, Matthias Claudius. When there was a festival or a feast among the peasants, he often wrote the story of it in verse. One night, in 1782, Matthias Claudius and all the neighbors were invited to the house of a neighbor to rejoice over a splendid harvest. They found a generous supper prepared for them, the tables piled high with great brown loaves of bread and wooden bowls overflowing with fruit. There was also a sheaf of wheat that the children had gathered to be tied to the top of a pole for the hungry birds during the winter.

The host stood by the table, looked about his warm kitchen, saw the happy faces of his friends and his children near the fire, and a song of wonder came from his thankful heart.

> All good things around us
> Are sent from heaven above,
> Then thank the Lord, oh, thank the Lord,
> For all his love!

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" was written by Phillips Brooks, while he was rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Philadelphia. Dr. Brooks was granted a year's leave of absence for travel in the Holy Land and elsewhere. On the trip he visited Bethlehem, saw its terraced gardens, and rode through the fields where the shepherds, while watching their flocks, saw the star and heard the angels' chorus. He worshipped with the people of Bethlehem in a Christmas service in a church which is supposed to mark the place where the stable stood in which Jesus was born. After his return to Philadelphia the carol took shape in his mind. It was first sung by the children in his Church School at a Christmas service. Countless times since Church School children have sung this beautiful Christmas hymn.

One of the great missionary hymns is "The Morning Light Is Breaking," by Samuel F. Smith. A man of great wealth, while making a tour of the world, he visited churches and schools in missionary fields—China, Korea, India. He saw hospitals and dispensaries connected with these churches and schools which impressed him greatly. In a letter home he wrote, "Within fifty miles of a mission compound I can tell that the missionaries are not far away. Their presence makes a difference in the life of the people." A more familiar hymn written by the same author is "My Country 'Tis of Thee," which he wrote in less than a half hour. It was sung first at a Fourth of July celebration in the Park Street Church, Boston. "The people took it into their hearts," said the author, "and sang it everywhere."

One would not have a discussion of hymns in The Riverside Church without thinking of at least one by its own pastor, Dr. Fosdick. So it was with the Women's Bible Class. They chose "The Prince of Peace, His Banner Spreads." In commenting about it Dr. Fosdick said that in these stirring days of storm and stress and anxiety, we should voice our desire for World Peace.

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THE CHURCH AND MEN IN THE SERVICE

From *Riverside Weekly* of January 13

The Board of Deacons at their meeting last week discussed the question of how best to express the interest of the church in the men who go into the service of the Country in any branch or department of the Army or the Navy. Already we have information concerning the enlistment of some of our young men. We want to be advised promptly by the men themselves, if they find time to do it, or else by their interested friends and relatives. Our readers are asked to please advise us about any man or woman connected with the church in any way, whether member or not, whom they may know to be going into the service.

The Board of Deacons asked the ministers to be responsible for gathering the information and for recommending some plan whereby the church could keep in touch with its representatives in the armed forces. The ministers are appealing to the members of the church to keep them advised about their own families and their friends and to be free to suggest any action on the part of the church that would conceivably be helpful.

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